INFORMATION REPORT

SECRET

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COUNTRY Poland

SUBJECT Rokita Chemical Plant at Brzeg Dolny (Dyhernfurth)

REPORT

DATE DISTR. 23 September 1955

NO. OF PAGES 3

REQUIREMENT NO. RD

REFERENCES

DATE OF INFO.

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This is UNEVALUATED Information

THE SOURCE EVALUATIONS IN THIS REPORT ARE DEFINITIVE.
THE APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.
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1. One building of the Rokita Chemical Plant at Brzeg Dolny contains a [illegible] pilot plant for the production of Gammexan BHC, an insecticide similar to DDT. This BHC is produced by the photo-chlorinating method. In July 1955, the pilot plant was producing 250 kg. of raw BHC containing 14% Gamma per day. All the equipment in the pilot plant was in good operating condition. The pilot plant was scheduled to be expanded in the future, but work on the expansion program had not yet begun. [redacted] 25X1
[redacted] production of raw BHC at Rokita would eventually be expanded 25X1 to 3,000 tons a year and that most of the necessary equipment would be furnished by the Poles themselves.

2. One section of the Rokita plant is engaged in the production of glycol and polyglycol from alcohol. Although this section of the plant is known to be in operation, nothing is known about production figures or the operating condition of the equipment. The pilot plant for the production of Gammexan BHC and the equipment for the production of glycol and polyglycol are in the same building or complex of buildings, but they are completely shut off from each other.

3. One section of the Rokita plant contains electrolytic equipment with mercury cells (Quecksilberzellen) for the production of chlorine. The electrolytic equipment includes 100 mercury cells, each with a strength of 15,000 amperes. This equipment was not put into operation according to the original schedule. The new schedule calls for the equipment, which is now completely installed, to go into operation during the late summer or fall of 1955. When in operation, it is expected to produce 45 metric tons of chlorine a day. Nothing definite is known about plans for the expansion of this section of the Rokita plant, but it is believed that no expansion is contemplated in the immediate future. Fluorine cannot be produced with the electrolytic equipment now in this section. The building containing the electrolytic equipment was constructed during recent years and is completely separate from the building containing the pilot plant for Gammexan BHC and the glycol and polyglycol unit.

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4. In one building of the Rokita plant the Poles have constructed a complete unit for the production of acetoacetic ester. This unit was constructed in exact accordance with the plans and information contained in the BIOS reports, a selection of reports confiscated from the Germans and published by the Allies after World War II. The chemical process used in the aceto-acetic ester unit is the Wacker process. The equipment for the unit was produced by the Poles themselves and appears to be well constructed. The acetoacetic unit is not yet in operation but all construction and installation work has been completed and the unit will be put into operation in the near future. When in operation, it will have a capacity of 600 metric tons a month. The building containing the acetoacetic ester unit is a brand new concrete and steel structure. It is about 50m. x 20m. x 25m. in size.

5. In some of the old buildings at Rokita the Poles have established workshops for the manufacture and repair of chemical equipment. Some of the types of equipment produced are homogeneous lead-lined apparatuses, copper apparatuses, agitators, evaporators, and distillation columns. The workmanship and quality of the equipment appears to be good. It is estimated that between 100 and 200 technicians are employed in the workshops. Polish officials of the Rokita plant have stated that chemical equipment for other Polish chemical factories is also produced at Rokita.

6. It is estimated that about 30% of the old I. G. Farben plant has now been reconstructed, and Polish officials at Rokita state that several thousand workmen are employed there. Several buildings in addition to the ones described above have already been constructed or are being rebuilt. Polish officials state that a unit for phenol snythesis through sulphonation (Phenol-Synthesis durch Sulfierung) is already in operation in one of the new buildings. They state that this unit employs a chemical process developed by the Russians. Nothing is known about the size or productive capacity of the phenol unit.

7. Although it is known that the Germans manufactured poison gas at this plant during World War II, there is no evidence that insecticides more toxic than Gammexan BHC are being manufactured or developed at Rokita. Polish officials have stated that they are not manufacturing phosphoric acid ester (phosphorsaeureester) or hydrocyanic acid (Blausaeure) and they have also indicated that they have no plans for manufacturing any insecticides other than Gammexan BHC, except for a herbicide known as 24D, which they may begin to manufacture in Rokita at some future date. There is no evidence, either, that nerve gas is being produced at Rokita. A general examination of the complex gives no indication that phosphorous, phosphorous trichloride, isopropyl alcohol, cyanides in any form, or other raw materials important for a nerve gas program are being manufactured. The general layout of the plant and the atmosphere among the plant's labor force does not give the impression that any secret project is underway. The equipment and manufacturing procedures are rather primitive and not suited to employment on sensitive or dangerous research projects. The personnel, especially at the higher levels, does not appear especially intelligent, capable, or well trained. It appears, in general, that the Poles will have all they can do to get into operation and run efficiently the sections of the plant already in existence, without attempting to produce or develop nerve gas or extremely toxic insecticides.

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